

IN THE CLAIMS:

Claims 1 - 6 (Cancelled)

**Claim 7 (Currently Amended)**

C | A method for purchasing a die formed from a first material provided by a certain supplier, said method comprising the steps of:

Obtaining a second material from said supplier;  
creating a first material signature by use of said second material;  
acquiring a sample of said die;  
creating a second material signature by use of said sample;  
determining whether said first and second material signatures are substantially similar; and

purchasing said die formed from said first material upon a determination that said first and second signatures are substantially similar;

wherein said first material signature comprises an amount of carbon, manganese, phosphorous, sulfur, silicon, chromium, molybdenum, and vanadium present within said second material;

wherein said second material signature comprises an amount of carbon, manganese, phosphorous, sulfur, silicon, chromium, molybdenum, and vanadium present within said material; and

wherein said second material has a certain toughness, said method further comprising the steps of:

determining said toughness; and

creating said first material signature only as said toughness is greater than a predetermined value.

Claims 8 - 10 (Cancelled)

**Claim 11 (Currently Amended)**

The method of claim 7 wherein said first material signature further comprises an amount of sulfide, aluminate, silicate and globular oxides present within said second material.

**Claim 12 (Original)**

The method of claim 11 wherein said second material signature further comprises an amount of sulfide, aluminate, silicate and globular oxides present within said material.

**Claim 13 (Currently Amended)**

A method for approving dies respectfully produced by a plurality of suppliers, said method comprising the step of:

Obtaining material from each of said plurality of suppliers;

Determining the presence and amount of certain constituents within each of said obtained materials, thereby creating a material signature for each of said plurality of suppliers;

Obtaining a sample from each die;

Determining the presence and amount of said certain constituents within each sample; and

Evaluating said dies by use of said material signatures and said presence and amount of said certain constituents; and

Further comprising the steps of testing the toughness of said obtained material; and only purchasing a die from a supplier of material which had a toughness which exceeded a predetermined value.

**Claim 14 (Previously Amended)**

The method of claim 13 wherein said constituent comprises of carbon, manganese, phosphorous, sulfur, silicon, chromium, molybdenum, and vanadium present within said second material.

**Claim 15 (Original)**

The method of claim 13 further comprises said steps of testing the toughness of said obtained material; and only purchasing a die from a supplier of material which has a toughness which exceeded a predetermined value.

**Claim 16 (Cancelled)**

**Claim 17 (Original)**

The method of claim 13 further comprising the step of only

purchasing a die form which a sample was taken which has the presence and amount of certain constituents equal to that which was found in at least one of said materials obtained from one of said plurality of suppliers.

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